

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.
Currently, claims 22-23, 25-28, 38-41 and 43-46 are pending in this application.

Allowable Subject Matter:

The Office Action indicated that claims 27 and 45 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this Amendment, claim 27 has now been rewritten in independent form including the limitations of base claim 21 and intervening claim 24. Claims 22-23, 25, 26 and 28 now depend at least indirectly from claim 27. Claim 45 has now been rewritten in independent form including the limitations of base claim 37 and intervening claim 42. Claims 38-41, 43-44 and 46 now depend at least indirectly from claim 45. Accordingly, all pending claims are allowable.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112:

Claims 21 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Since these claims have been canceled, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112 is deemed moot. Applicant submits that now allowable independent claims 27 and 45, which include the limitations of now canceled claims 21 and 37, respectively, include a sufficient antecedent basis for all limitations.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103:

Claims 21-23 and 37-41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Rielly (U.S. '809). Claims 24, 25, 42 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Sika (U.S. '643) in view of Ganti (U.S. '919). Claims 28 and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Rielly, Ganti and Laskaris (U.S. '333). Claims 26 and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Rielly, Ganti, Laskaris and Ishida (U.S. '853). As discussed above, claims 22-23, 25, 26-28, 38-41, 43-44 and 46 are now allowable by virtue of their dependency from one of allowable independent claims 27 and 45. All other claims have been canceled. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the above rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103 be withdrawn.

JORDAN et al.
Application No. 10/053,716
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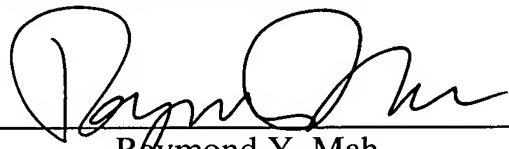
Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: _____



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